

FAITH IN AN ANXIOUS WORLD

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

What parents need to know about Faith in an Anxious World

We don't need to look far to see that our teenagers are hurting.

While today's parents, stepparents, and ministry leaders are more aware of teen anxiety, depression, and suicide, we often aren't sure how to respond. We need practical, accessible, and trusted resources that spark vital conversations with our teenagers.

That's why our youth ministry is beginning a new four-week series called *Faith in an Anxious World*. In the coming weeks, we want to propel your young person and other students toward a deeper understanding of Christ—one in which he becomes to them not simply a teacher and miracle worker, but a living, breathing example of the wholeness we can experience in our daily walk with God. Each week they'll talk about anxiety, delve into stories throughout the Bible where God enters into an anxious situation and uses it to nurture growth, and discover spiritual practices they can use to look to God as they navigate daily life. And each of our gatherings will prompt students to have meaningful conversations beyond their youth meeting times.

As we journey through this four-part series, your student will be encouraged to build themselves a “circle” of trusted adults they can call on when they need to talk about how they feel. Each week your student will receive a take-home sheet that recommends a conversation they can have with a trusted adult. This could be the same adult weekly, or, if your student is comfortable, they can grow a wider circle by connecting with a different trusted adult each time. *The wider a student's circle, the more people they will have to turn to in a crisis.*

You can help by looking over your child's schedule together and blocking out an hour each week for the next four weeks so that your student can have these meaningful conversations. You might even consider buying four coffee shop gift cards so that your young person can have four meetups in an accessible place as they build their circle of support. Who your kid meets with is their choice—but you should always feel comfortable that the people they choose to meet with are appropriate, healthy adults.

To help you stay sharp as a parent, we are giving you additional tools to help you learn and grow all week long. Keep an eye out for...

- Regular communication from our youth ministry full of suggestions and tools to have life-giving conversations at home with your young person.
- Links to download the [Faith in an Anxious World Parenting Podcast](#) featuring parent-focused conversations with mental health experts sharing practical ideas for your family.

If you are ever concerned about your child's safety, don't hesitate to reach out to one or more of the following...

- Dial 911 if you feel that your child is in immediate danger to him/herself or others.
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline \(1-800-273-8255\)](#), or visit [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](#) to chat with someone online.
- Contact a pastor or your child's youth leader.
- Enlist the help of a caring professional. As we will discuss in week 3 of the 4-week series, often the timely intervention of a trained therapist or counselor can bring new healing, freedom, and joy to both students and families.

Anxiety is a reality for today's teenagers. Let's work together to bring help and hope to an anxious generation!